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Measures to eliminate international terrorism

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Letter dated 9 August 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The recent letter addressed to you by the Chargé d'affaires of the Syrian Arab Republic contains a series of distortions and inaccuracies that further illustrate the necessity, as I set forth in my letter dated 6 July 2001 (A/56/161-S/2001/673), of seriously questioning the suitability of the Syrian candidature for a seat on the United Nations Security Council. I will endeavour herein to set the record straight.

The Syrian representative, among others, continues to set forth the untenable position that Israel is occupying Lebanese land in the Shab'a farm lands. Israel's position on this has been articulated numerous times, most explicitly in my letter dated 18 April 2001, and there is no need to do so again. Suffice it to say, the United Nations Security Council, in resolution 1310 (2000), affirmed that "as of 16 June 2000 Israel had withdrawn its forces from Lebanon in accordance with resolution 425 (1978)". The Syrian position is therefore in contradiction not simply with that of Israel, but more importantly, with that of the Council and the Secretary-General as well.

Moreover, the Syrian representative's allegations of Israeli occupation ring hollow in light of the Syrian Arab Republic's continued occupation of Lebanon. His assertion that all peoples are endowed with the right to resist foreign occupation must also presumably extend to the people of Lebanon, an increasing number of whom have called for the withdrawal of Syrian forces. Moreover, his justification for why Syrian forces had entered Lebanon in the first place — the fact that they "preserved the unity of Lebanon's territory and quenched the fires of the civil war" — is an obvious pretence. The Lebanese civil war has long since ended, and yet the unquenchable Syrian desire for hegemony over Lebanon remains.

With regard to Hizbullah, it need hardly be mentioned that this is an organization widely recognized as responsible for scores of terrorist attacks against Israelis and other nationals. Hizbullah is also the primary source of tension and instability along the Israel-Lebanon border and has been the source of numerous acts

* A/56/150.

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of violence and terror, including the kidnapping of three Israeli soldiers on 7 October 2000. The Syrian representative, in referring to this terrorist organization as "a Lebanese party", demonstrates his apparent inability to distinguish between politics and terror. The Syrian Arab Republic, after all, supports international terrorism, serves as host to terrorist headquarters and training facilities, and permits transfers of arms from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Hizbullah operatives in the field to pass through Syrian territory. Clearly, from the Syrian perspective, the use of terrorism as a political instrument is a perfectly legitimate practice; politics and terror are merely two sides of the same coin.

It is for these reasons that the Syrian Arab Republic's candidature for Security Council membership must be carefully scrutinized. Prior membership on the Council should not be considered sufficient grounds for future membership. Rather, it is the policies and actions of States, and their contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security, that should be foremost in considering eligibility for membership in such an important body of the United Nations. In this regard, the verdict is rather clear: the Syrian Arab Republic's occupation of Lebanon and its support for Hizbullah have increased the level of violence and tension along the Israel-Lebanon border and are a destabilizing force in the region.

Israel calls on Member States to carefully consider the Syrian Arab Republic's candidature for membership on the Security Council in light of these facts.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under item 178 of the provisional agenda and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yehuda **Lancry**
Permanent Representative

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Fifty-sixth session
Item 20 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Letter dated 7 August 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to request that the letter addressed to you by H.E. Dr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Sudan, on 11 June 2001 (see annex), be circulated as a document of the fifty-six session of the General Assembly, under item 20 (a) of the provisional agenda, "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations".

(*Signed*) Elfatih **Erwa**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 7 August 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan addressed to the Secretary-General

I write in reference to the previous communications from my Government addressed to you, regarding the decision to suspend aerial bombardments against the forces of the rebel movement the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in the areas of military operation in southern Sudan.

You may recall that my Government took that positive step in response to the request made by the international humanitarian and relief organizations working in the aforementioned areas, on the one hand, and to provide a conducive environment for the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) summit peace talks on the Sudan, on the other.

I am pleased to inform you that the above-mentioned IGAD summit took place in Nairobi, 2 June 2001, under the Chairmanship of President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, and with the participation of other Heads of State and Government, among them President Omer Hassan Ahmed AlBashir, President of the Republic of the Sudan.

During the summit, there was a general consensus of the urgent need for the implementation of an immediate ceasefire in the areas of military operation in southern Sudan in order to accelerate the flow of humanitarian assistance to the needy civilian population in those areas, and to facilitate for constructive negotiations between the Government and the rebel movement (SPLM/A), with the ultimate aim of reaching a peaceful resolution of the conflict in the south. However, it is now well known that SPLM/A, continuing its intransigent stance, not only vehemently opposed the proposed immediate ceasefire, but also provoked the situation by launching intensive military operations in western Bahr-El-Ghazal state, causing the loss of the lives of a considerable number of innocent civilians and the displacement of thousands of others, thus creating, once again, a humanitarian crisis in the state and its immediate environs, as it did in early 1998.

Furthermore, the rebel movement (SPLM/A), intoxicated by its military operations in western Bahr-El-Ghazal state and the aggravated humanitarian situation as a result of its military operations, has made it clear that, within its plans, it does not contemplate implementing an immediate ceasefire, but rather continuing its military operations and hostilities with the purpose of trying to engulf the states of Kordofan and Darfur in western Sudan.

My Government has no doubt that an escalation of military operations anywhere in the country constitutes a serious threat to its peace and stability and puts the civilian population as well as the humanitarian and relief workers in the war-affected areas at risk. My Government's continued call for a comprehensive ceasefire in the war-affected areas in the south will obviously, if implemented, alleviate the suffering of the civilian population in those areas and provide a conducive atmosphere for a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

In light of the above, the Government of the Republic of the Sudan strongly feels that, in order to avoid more suffering of the civilian population in the war-affected areas in the south, and in order to provide a conducive environment for a comprehensive peaceful resolution of the conflict thereto, the international community, especially the United Nations, is called upon to condemn the ongoing aggression by the rebel movement (SPLM/A) against the Sudanese people in general, and the people in the south in particular, and to exert pressure on the rebel movement to accept an immediate ceasefire in southern Sudan.

(*Signed*) Mustafa Osman **Ismail**
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Sudan